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RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEHGG/UN SECURITY COUNCIL COLLECTIVE
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 0810
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 4356
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 7901
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 5462
RUEHCHI/AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI 1310
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1250
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 RANGOON 000019

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DEPT FOR EAP/MLS, DRL, AND IO
PACOM FOR FPA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/10/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [BM](#)

SUBJECT: ASSK MEETS WITH REGIME; UN MOVING SLOWLY ON
GAMBARI VISIT

REF: A. USUN NEW YORK 8

[1](#)B. 06 RANGOON 1701

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Classified By: P/E Chief Leslie Hayden for Reasons 1.4 (b) & (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: Aung San Suu Kyi met with regime liaison Aung Kyi today at the Government Guest House. It was her first meeting with the regime since November 19. UN Staff told us they are not preparing for any Gambari visit and also informed us that the GOB has still not granted permission for Gambari to assign a staff member to Burma. Like other diplomatic missions, the UN has difficulty obtaining routine visas for staff and official visitors. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Embassy sources confirmed that Aung San Suu Kyi met with Minister of Relations Aung Kyi today between 13:00 and 14:10 at the Government Guest House. Embassy employees observed a motorcade with blackened windows traveling from ASSK's house to the Government Guest House and back during this time. The government did not inform officials from ASSK's National League for Democracy party about the meeting, so they had no information on what was discussed.

[1](#)3. (C) We also spoke today with Deputy UN Resident Coordinator Sanaka Samarasingha and Deputy Resident Representative Shahrokh Mohammadi to follow up on the preparations for Gambari's next visit to Burma outlined in Ref A. Samarsingha acknowledged that the UN Country Team (UNCT) in Rangoon had been tasked with drafting a paper for Gambari on a proposed structure for the Poverty Alleviation Commission. The UNCT had not finished a draft but were currently working to put one together for Acting UN Resident Coordinator Dan Baker to discuss with Gambari during a scheduled meeting in New York on January 14. According to Samarsingha, Gambari planned to present the proposal to the GOB during his next visit. Asked if the UNCT was working with the GOB to develop the proposal, Samarsingha replied they were not. Additionally, neither Samarsingha nor Mohammadi were aware of any work being done by the UNCT on the issue of broadening the Constitution Drafting Committee, but

volunteered that the DPA in New York may have the lead on this issue. Samarsinha commented that the Burma UNCT did not have the expertise to work on this issue since most UNCT members were humanitarian assistance specialists rather than political experts.

¶4. (C) Samarsinha continued that, as far as he knew, Gambari had not been granted permission to return to Burma, so UN staff here were not engaged in any discussions with the GOB regarding a schedule for any visit in January. The UN was also still waiting for GOB approval and a visa for Gambari's assistant to be temporarily stationed in Burma to assist Gambari with his mission. Samarsinha commented that the GOB was not pleased with Gambari's efforts to establish an office in Burma, and thought it unlikely the authorities would grant Gambari permission to do so. If Gambari secured the agreement for this arrangement during his next visit, Samarsinha commented, it would be a positive development.

¶5. (C) Like other diplomatic missions in Burma, the UN has difficulties obtaining routine visas for their employees and official visitors, Samarsinha shared. The GOB demands repeated diplomatic notes from the UN, assuring the government that the visitors would "not work outside the terms of reference" of their visas.

¶6. (C) Comment: Unless Aung San Suu Kyi is allowed to meet with her party again soon, it will take some time to find out what she discussed with Aung Kyi at this latest meeting; we will likely have to wait for a report from her doctor. Although Gambari may expect to return to Burma at the end of January, UN staff in Rangoon are not engaged in any immediate preparations for this trip. They are not working with their GOB counterparts on the Poverty Alleviation Commission proposal because these officials have no authority to make decisions. Indeed, when Gambari first raised Burma's dire humanitarian situation with Than Shwe, The Senior General

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dressed down Gambari and denied there were any such problems (Ref B). Gambari should shift his focus from establishment of a Poverty Alleviation Commission back to the political dialogue, which is in serious need of attention, despite today's meeting. Only a genuine dialogue can address the political causes of the humanitarian crisis Than Shwe refuses to admit exists. End comment.
VILLAROSA